

**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 5**

DATE: April 12, 2002

SUBJECT: Reports of Significant Developments and Activities
Ending on April 5, 2002

FROM: William E. Muno, Director
Superfund Division

TO: Thomas V. Skinner
Regional Administrator

Bharat Mathur
Deputy Regional Administrator

The activities listed below are organized by site-specific activities and training/conferences:

SITE-SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

Emergency Response, Ion Exchange Site, Chicago, Illinois

During the week of March 11-15, 2002, Emergency Response Branch began a cleanup of an abandoned chemical laboratory at the Ion Exchange site on South Halsted in Chicago, where Joseph Konopka ("Dr. Chaos") obtained some of the chemicals he stored in a Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) tunnel. The project included removal and disposal of about 300 jars of laboratory chemicals and 15 drums of sulfuric acid and sodium hypochlorite (household bleach). Office of Public Affairs (OPAs) coordinated significant media interest, including news coverage by AP-Chicago, WLS-TV (Channel 7), WGN-TV (Channel 9), WBBM-TV (Channel 2), WBBM-AM radio, *Chicago Tribune* and *Milwaukee Journal*. OPAs also prepared a short background sheet for Alderman Dorothy Tillman (Ward 3).

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Potentially Responsible Party Removal Completed, H&R Paper Site (a.k.a. H&R Landfill), Green Bay, Wisconsin

On March 12, 2002, United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) closed out an Administrative Order on Consent (AOC) with Procter & Gamble (P&G) for removal activities at the H&R Paper site (also known as H&R Landfill) located in Green Bay,

Wisconsin. The landfill operated between 1970 and 1984, accepting primarily paper mill waste from the P&G facility in Green Bay. In May of 2000, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources requested assistance to address methane migration problems potentially impacting a residential area directly northwest of the landfill. U.S. EPA proposed an intercept trench to stop the methane migration, but prior to initiating actions, P&G, the main potentially responsible party (PRP) for the site, agreed to conduct removal activities pursuant to a Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) 7003 Administrative Order. In August 2001, P&G's contractor RMT initiated work consisting of a combination of gas extraction well retrofits and site grading improvements. Work was completed in October of 2001, and followed by 60 days of monitoring to ensure the system improvements were controlling the methane migration.

Contact: Brad Benning (312-353-7613)

Emergency Assessment (Structural Stability), Surface Impoundment, Cometco Facility, Chicago, Illinois

On March 26, 2002, Region 5 On-Scene Coordinators (OSCs) Mike Collins and Charles Gebien visited the Cometco facility located in Chicago, Illinois, to investigate the stability of the site's storm water surface impoundment located adjacent to the Chicago River. Concern over the possible collapse of the surface impoundment was relayed to the Region 5 Emergency Response Branch (ERB), after a recent site inspection by Sue Rodenbeck Brauer, Region 5 Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Used Oil Expert. During the site visit, the OSCs and the Superfund Technical Assistance & Response Team (START) interviewed Cometco representatives and photographed the undercutting of the River bank on the wall of the surface impoundment. There was no indication of an ongoing release from the surface impoundment to the Chicago River. START will prepare a professional engineer's review on the stability of the surface impoundment, and an evaluation of the potential for collapse of the impoundment wall that is common with the bank of the Chicago River.

Contacts: Charles Gebien (312-353-7645)
Mike Collins (312-886-6436)

Administrative Complaint Filed, Honeywell International, Inc., Detroit, Michigan

On March 29, 2002, the U.S. EPA filed an Administrative Complaint against Honeywell International, Inc., Detroit, Michigan. The

Complaint alleges violations of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) Section 103 and the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) Sections 304 (a) & (c). On February 5, 1998, the facility had a 7,000 to 8,000 pound release of coal tar. Two components of coal tar benzo(a)pyrene and dibenz(a,h)anthracene are hazardous substances under CERCLA; each with a reportable quantity of one pound. The maximum quantity released of each chemical was five pounds. They called the National Response Center (NRC) and the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) on February 6, 1998. The respondent provided the written follow-up report to the SERC and the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) on February 12, 1998. On December 17, 1999, Honeywell had a release of 4,500 pounds of coal tar. This released 243 pounds of benzo(a)pyrene and 48 pounds of dibenz(a,h)anthracene. They called the NRC and the SERC on December 17, 1999. The respondent provided the written follow-up report to the SERC and LEPC on January 21, 2000, or 35 days after the incident. They immediately called the LEPC on both of these releases. Honeywell International, Inc., is in compliance with sections 311 and 312 of EPCRA. The proposed penalty in the complaint is \$144,468.86. Honeywell International, Inc., will have 30 days to respond to the Complaint.

Contact: James Entzminger (312-886-4062)

Risk Management Planning Inspection Conducted, Pekin Terminal, Creve Coeur, Illinois

On April 4, 2002, Silvia Palomo and Bob Mayhugh from the Office of Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention (OCEPP), conducted an inspection at the Pekin Terminal in Creve Coeur, Illinois. The purpose of the inspection was to review the Risk Management Program that the facility has in place for the 30,000-ton anhydrous ammonia tank. The anhydrous ammonia tank is a process as defined under 40 C.F.R. Part 68, the Risk Management Program regulations mandated under Section 112(r) of the Clean Air Act. Pekin Terminal is one of several facilities operated by Koch Nitrogen Company supplying ammonia to the Midwest farming area, where it's used as fertilizer. Anhydrous ammonia is brought to the terminal via barges, as well as railcars. The anhydrous ammonia is stored in the storage tank until it is loaded onto railcars and trucks for distribution.

Contacts: Silvia Palomo (312-353-2172)
Robert Mayhugh (312-886-5929)

Risk Management Planning Inspection Conducted, Farmers Exchange Fertilizer Facility, Farmersville, Illinois

On April 3, 2002, Silvia Palomo and Bob Mayhugh from the Office of Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention (OCEPP), conducted an inspection at the Farmers Exchange Fertilizer facility in Farmersville, Illinois. The purpose of the inspection was to determine compliance with the Risk Management Program (RMP) regulations mandated under Section 112(r) of the Clean Air Act. The facility owns and operates three anhydrous ammonia tanks with a capacity of 50,000 pounds each. Farmers Exchange Fertilizer is a retail ammonia facility supplying anhydrous ammonia to farmers. K.C. Industries and Granite City Terminal supply the ammonia to the facility. The anhydrous ammonia is stored in the storage tanks until it is loaded into nurse tanks for distribution.

Contacts: Silvia Palomo (312-353-2172)
Robert Mayhugh (312-886-5929)

Meeting (Adjacent Landowner Access Refusal), Parson's Casket Hardware Co. Superfund Site, Belvidere, Illinois

On March 5, 2002, Jon Peterson, along with Eric Runkel from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA), met with representatives of Cam-Car Textron. This company adjoins the Parson's Casket Hardware site and had been investigated by U.S. EPA and Illinois EPA because groundwater contaminated with perchloroethane appeared to be emanating from their property onto the Parson's site. The Illinois EPA is currently collecting groundwater samples from all monitoring wells in the vicinity of the site in order to complete the feasibility study for the groundwater operable unit and this party was refusing access to sample the wells on their property. Jon Peterson endeavored to convince the company to allow access in order to get the big picture of groundwater in the area while the Illinois EPA is still mobilized but despite his best efforts, the company is asking for more time to consider their situation before granting access.

Contact: Jon Peterson (312-353-1264)

Sampling Proposal Presented, Northwestern Barrel Site (a.k.a. Marina Cliffs Barrel Dump), South Milwaukee, Wisconsin

On March 6, 2002, U.S. EPA, Wisconsin Departments of Natural Resources and Health and Family Services, and the potentially responsible parties presented a preliminary soil and groundwater sampling plan to residents of the Marina Cliffs condominiums in South Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The condominiums lie on property once used by the former Northwestern Barrel site. The site, which lies adjacent to the residential area, is the subject of a nearly completed Superfund removal action. The agencies want to confirm earlier residential soil samples, which indicate that barrel operations had minimal impact on the residential area. Representatives also discussed options for facilitating the association's completion of a major drainage project in the residential area, which has been on hold pending the sampling. City officials were briefed in a separate meeting.

Contacts: Bri Bill (312-353-6646)
Fred Bartman (312-886-0776)
Tom Krueger (312-886-0562)

Village Board Meeting (Site Status), Beloit Corporation Superfund Site, Rockton, Illinois

On March 5, 2002, Jon Peterson traveled to Rockton, Illinois, to attend a Rockton Village Board meeting. The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA) was on the agenda to explain their progress towards a final Record of Decision for this State enforcement lead site. Jon Peterson attended the meeting because U.S. EPA had filed a claim in bankruptcy against Beloit Corporation, seeking and receiving over \$5 million from the bankruptcy court to pay for the future site remediation. This settlement, however, means that the project will become a Federal lead site after the Record of Decision (ROD) because the bankruptcy agreements were Federal agreements. Interestingly, several of the Village Board members were pushing hard to acquire parcels on the site, so Jon Peterson explained how the work at the site may proceed after the ROD when the project returns to Federal lead and how the Village might leave themselves open to Superfund liability.

Contact: Jon Peterson (312-353-1264)

First Meeting (Potentially Responsible Party), Amber Oil Property Site, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

On March 14, 2002, On-Scene Coordinators Charles Gebien and Michael Collins, Jerome Kujawa of Office of Regional Counsel, and Kaushal Khanna of the Emergency Enforcement Support Section, met

with Mr. Truesdale, the current owner of the Amber Oil Property site in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Mr. Truesdale was very cooperative, and provided some valuable information about the site. Many companies occupied the site since the early 1900's. Another meeting is planned.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources referred the site to Region 5 in November 2001. The site has two buildings and a bulk storage tank area. One building has at least four underground storage tanks (USTs) and several 55-gallon drums filled with product. Several above-ground storage tanks (ASTs) on the bulk storage area contain liquid products. Pipes connecting tanks appeared to be wrapped in asbestos containing material. Based on U.S. EPA sampling in February 2002, waste on the site contains high levels of polyaromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), BETX (Benzene, EthylBenzene, Toluene, Xylene) compounds, Chromium, Barium, and low flash point compounds.

Contacts: Charlie Gebien (312-353-7645)
Kaushal Khanna (312-353-2663)

TRAINING/CONFERENCES

U.S. EPA Presentation (What is an On-Scene Coordinator?), Avondale Elementary School Career Day, Chicago, Illinois

On March 26, 2002, On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) Charles Gebien and Keith Lesniak participated in the annual career day for fourth and fifth grade students at the Avondale Elementary School in Chicago, Illinois. Mr. Gebien and Mr. Lesniak presented PowerPoint photos of emergency response and removal actions, and described the duties of OSCs and other emergency responders. Keith donned level C personal protective equipment and demonstrated a variety of air monitoring equipment. The students from each of the three classes that attended were very enthusiastic and inquisitive about the environmental field.

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Keith Lesniak (312-886-7189)

Citizens Advisory Group Initial Meetings, Lockformer Company Site, Lisle, Illinois

Office of Public Affairs's Community Involvement Coordinator Mike Joyce is assisting residents who live near the Lockformer site in Lisle, Illinois, in forming a citizens advisory group (CAG).

Mike helped organize the group's initial meetings on March 12 and 21, 2002. The wells of more than 150 homes near the site are contaminated with trichloroethylene (TCE), an industrial degreasing chemical. The Lockformer site CAG was formed at the request of Governor George Ryan's Action Team, a task force of Federal, State and local officials appointed to address groundwater contamination in DuPage County.

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Workshop (Disaster Planning)

Office of Public Affairs (OPAs) managers participated in a joint Federal agency and State public affairs workshop led by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The focus was on roles in the Federal response plan, how a public affairs office can prepare for a Presidentially declared disaster, coordination among the public affairs offices of multiple agencies, and the similarities and differences between crisis and consequence management. The workshop confirmed the importance of the planning work OPAs has been doing as part of the Region's update of the Continuity of Operations Plan.

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Workshop (Community Involvement), Allied Paper, Inc./Portage Creek/Kalamazoo River Superfund Site, Kalamazoo, Michigan

On March 14, 2002, more than 55 Kalamazoo River community residents, representing all of the communities along the 80-mile stretch of river, participated in a workshop. The workshop was designed by Office of Public Affairs' Community Involvement staff to augment prior research efforts necessary for a site community involvement plan. This workshop approach, to help formulate a Superfund communications program, is a Regional innovation involving a team of Community Involvement Coordinators and Remedial Project Managers.

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